

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. THUNE. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from Idaho (Mr. CRAPO) and the Senator from Kansas (Mr. MORAN).

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 52, nays 46, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 392 Ex.]

YEAS—52

Baldwin	Hickenlooper	Reed
Bennet	Hirono	Rosen
Blumenthal	Kaine	Sanders
Booker	Kelly	Schatz
Brown	King	Schumer
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Capito	Leahy	Sinema
Cardin	Lujan	Smith
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	Menendez	Van Hollen
Cortez Masto	Merkley	Warner
Duckworth	Murphy	Warnock
Durbin	Murray	Warren
Feinstein	Ossoff	Whitehouse
Gillibrand	Padilla	Wyden
Hassan	Peters	
Heinrich	Portman	

NAYS—46

Barrasso	Grassley	Romney
Blackburn	Hagerty	Rounds
Blunt	Hawley	Rubio
Boozman	Hoeven	Sasse
Braun	Hyde-Smith	Scott (FL)
Burr	Inhofe	Scott (SC)
Cassidy	Johnson	Shelby
Collins	Kennedy	Sullivan
Cornyn	Lankford	Thune
Cotton	Lee	Tillis
Cramer	Lummis	Toomey
Cruz	Marshall	Tuberville
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Murkowski	Young
Fischer	Paul	
Graham	Risch	

NOT VOTING—2

Crapo Moran

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 52, the nays are 46.

The motion is agreed to.

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the nomination.

The bill clerk read the nomination of Jonathan Eugene Meyer, of Ohio, to be General Counsel, Department of Homeland Security.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding rule XXII, all postcloture time on executive Calendar Nos. 264 and 159 be considered expired at 4:45 p.m. today; that the vote on confirmation of the Anderson nomination occur at 4:45 p.m. today; and that the vote on confirmation of the Meyer nomination occur at a time to be determined by the majority leader, following consultation with the Republican leader on Thursday, September 30.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

The senior Senator from Oregon.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—EXECUTIVE CALENDAR

Mr. WYDEN. Madam President, in a few minutes, I will put forward the unanimous consent request that the Senate take up and approve a highly qualified and unquestionably noncontroversial nominee. I am going to take just a few minutes to talk about Jonathan Davidson, nominated to be the next Deputy Under Secretary for Legislative Affairs at the Treasury Department.

To do this briefly, there are a few key points to make about this important nomination. To start, Jon isn't just a person off the street being nominated for a new job in the Biden administration. In fact, my guess is, virtually every Member of this body, Democrats and Republicans alike, have worked with Jon at one point or another.

From 2011 until he was nominated this past spring, Jon served as chief of staff to another Finance Committee colleague, Senator BENNET. He is known as somebody who is honest, who is hardworking, and who is committed, most importantly, to bringing people together to tackle big challenges, and he has been doing it a long time.

Before his work with Senator BENNET, Jon served as chief of staff to Senator Paul Sarbanes. He spent time in the office of Representative JOHN SARBANES, and he was later chief counsel to our friend and colleague, Senator MARK WARNER. You don't have to take it from me that Jon knows his way around the Congress. All of those Members trusted Jon as a right-hand man.

The second issue: I can't find any controversy with respect to his nomination. He cleared the Senate's Finance Committee on a 28-to-0 vote.

Let me repeat that: 28-to-0 vote.

In fact, the Finance Committee reported out several nominees this Congress without any Republican opposition, none at all. Normally, that would be enough to pave the way for prompt and full Senate consideration, but I think we all understand these are not normal times here in the U.S. Senate.

It used to be the case, at the end of July, the two sides would come together and look to pass a package of noncontroversial nominees by unanimous consent. My Finance Committee team thought this would be the case this year. Unfortunately, that did not take place. Senate Republicans were just in no mood to clear even the most uncontroversial nominees.

This is an extraordinary level of obstruction beyond what you saw when the previous administration was staffing up. For example, let's take the previous two nominees for the same position Jon is up for.

Drew Maloney was the first Trump nominee for Legislative Affairs at Treasury. The Finance Committee held a hearing on this nomination on June 7, 2017. The committee voted on his nomination a week later, favorably reported by a vote of 25 to 1. A few weeks

after that, the full Senate passed his nomination by unanimous consent, along with several other nominations for roles in the Trump Treasury Department. That is how the process generally unfolds.

Two years later, Brian McGuire was nominated to replace Mr. Maloney. His hearing was held July 24, 2019. The Finance Committee approved his nomination a week later. He was confirmed to serve in the Trump administration on September 24.

In both cases, these two nominees, colleagues, were confirmed 2 months after their hearings.

Jon Davidson has been waiting 4 months since his hearing on May 25—nearly twice as long as Trump nominees waited for the same job.

I think we all understand that it is essential to have qualified individuals heading up offices of Legislative Affairs. They help to make sure administrations follow the laws, just as the Senate passes as intended. They help Members write legislation. They make sure that all Members get responses to their questions with respect to oversight.

Setting everything else aside, you would think Senate Republicans would be especially interested now in making sure the Senate can perform that essential oversight. I myself am looking for some straight answers to a number of oversight requests I had posed to the Treasury Department, and having Jon installed in his new role as Treasury would sure help to move that process along. Federal Agencies and the Congress need these legislative point guards in order for Agencies to run as smoothly as possible.

This isn't a policy position, nor is Jon Davidson a nominee who raises any major concern from anybody. I have yet to hear even anything resembling a substantive reason from Senate Republicans for opposing a nominee like Jon Davidson, who got a 28-to-nothing vote out of committee to lead this office. There is no reason for delaying any longer.

Therefore, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the following nomination: Calendar No. 168, Jonathan Davidson, to be Deputy Under Secretary of the Treasury; that the nomination be confirmed, the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate; that no further motions be in order to the nomination; and that the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HICKENLOOPER). Is there objection?

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Reserving the right to object. Mr. President, this continues a discussion we have been having for days and indeed weeks and indeed months. Joe Biden is being flagrantly

lawless, in that he is refusing to impose mandatory congressional sanctions passed by Congress in the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, also known as CAATSA.

CAATSA was designed for precisely the purpose of taking away the President's discretion to impose sanctions on Russia in cases where Congress deemed it necessary to mandate them.

CAATSA passed Congress overwhelmingly. The vote was 98 to 2. Indeed, in September 2020, my colleague Senator WYDEN wrote a letter that was joined by 10 other Democrats about Russian malign activities.

Senator WYDEN's letter stated: "Congress has mandated a broad range of sanctions tools, and it is long past time for the administration to send a direct message to President Putin."

The letter continues, specifically citing the "sanctions mandated provided for in" CAATSA.

President Biden is legally obligated to Nord Stream 2 AG, the company responsible for the planning, the construction, and the eventual operation of Putin's Nord Stream 2 Pipeline.

Nord Stream 2 AG has committed acts that require the imposition of these mandated sanctions under CAATSA Section 228. Section 228 mandates sanctions on any company that conducts any "significant transactions," including "deceptive transactions," for Russian companies that are already sanctioned.

In May, the Biden State Department sent Congress a certification confirming that Nord Stream 2 AG had engaged in those actions. It is clear that Nord Stream 2 AG falls under the mandatory sanctions of CAATSA. Nobody, not even the Biden administration, denies that the Biden State Department sent that certification confirming those actions. Nevertheless, President Biden and, in particular, the Department of Treasury is refusing to implement the law.

I have spoken directly with Secretary Yellen. I have spoken directly with the Deputy Secretary of Treasury. The law is clear and unequivocal. And because of the political agenda of the Biden White House, because of President Biden's desire to surrender to Vladimir Putin and to give him a multibillion-dollar pipeline, weakening America, weakening Europe, and giving vast resources to Putin to hold Europe subject to energy blackmail, Treasury is refusing to follow the law.

Nevertheless, I have been willing to offer a compromise. I have placed holds on nominees to the State Department and some of the nominees to the Treasury Department. And I have offered a compromise to lift the holds on this nominee and other nominees to the Treasury Department, and also to lift the holds on career nominees to State if either the Biden administration follows the law in CAATSA and impose sanctions. That is option A. That would be the best option.

Or option B, if they decide because, for whatever political reason, they be-

lieve surrendering to Putin is a good idea notwithstanding America's national security interest, there is a second option that I have offered to lift those holds, which is they could impose the sanctions under CAATSA and then immediately delist Nord Stream 2 AG. That would prevent the sanctions from going into effect, but it would also trigger an automatic vote here in this Congress to override that decision.

I have made that offer, along with Senator TOOMEY, in writing months ago. It is a reasonable compromise, and yet the Biden administration won't take it. They won't take it because they are terrified, if and when Congress votes on that override, that an overwhelming bipartisan majority of Congress in the Senate and the House will vote to override Joe Biden's indefensible decision to surrender to Vladimir Putin.

Nonetheless, in the spirit of reasonableness, I am happy to offer the Senator from Oregon the same deal or a similar deal, at least, right here and right now.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2894

Mr. President, there is a bill that I filed that imposes CAATSA 228 sanctions on Nord Stream 2 AG. Every Democrat in this Chamber has supported sanctions on Nord Stream 2.

In a moment, I am going to ask for unanimous consent to pass the legislation simply mandating that the Biden administration, that the Treasury Department—and this is a Treasury nominee that we are discussing—follow the law.

If the Senator from Oregon will agree to my unanimous consent request and that bill passes the Senate, I will not object to this nominee if the Senator from Oregon is willing to accept that, because that will move the process along. The objective is to stop this pipeline that strengthens Putin, weakens Europe, and weakens America.

And, indeed, if we pass the legislation mandating the CAATSA sanctions, I won't object to this nominee. When that legislation passes the House, I will lift my hold on another Treasury nominee. And when the President does the right thing and signs it into law, I will lift my holds on all the Treasury nominees.

So it is a reasonable, incremental step forward that gives the Senator from Oregon the chance to demonstrate that when Democrats give speeches about how Nord Stream 2 is bad for America, bad for Europe, bad for the environment but good for Russia and Putin, we can now discover whether or not Democrats actually believe what they have said in speeches so many times.

Therefore, I ask that the Senator modify his request so that in addition to confirming the nomination and, as if in legislative session, that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. 2894, which is at the desk; that the bill be considered read a third time and passed; and that the motion

to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Does the Senator so modify his request?

Mr. WYDEN. Reserving the right to object, Mr. President.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Oregon.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, let's understand exactly what is at issue here. Jonathan Davidson has been nominated to be the Deputy Under Secretary for Legislative Affairs. In that particular role, he would not be directly involved in decisions over sanctions, No. 1.

No. 2, when it comes to Nord Stream 2, the Biden administration, to their credit, has recognized the threat from Russia, but also that the pipeline is nearly complete and the Trump administration failed to stop the construction.

Everything my colleague from Texas is raising in his concerns about Nord Stream 2 is already happening with another pipeline—Turk Stream 2—and my colleague is aware of this. He has been briefed repeatedly.

Now, for those who don't have access to the same kind of information that my colleague has, gas is already being diverted from Ukraine into Europe through Turk Stream 2 because the past administration did nothing about that pipeline either.

The Biden administration has actually put a plan forward to mitigate the effects of Nord Stream 2 and has received concrete agreements from the Germans to move Ukraine toward energy independence and address Russian threats.

I am just going to close with just another dose of good government. The 9/11 Commission specifically warned about the need to have senior, confirmed individuals in place to avoid a threat to the homeland. And, by the way, we did that during the Trump administration. We have far less people confirmed today than we did in 2001, before 9/11.

In my view, this has got to end. For these reasons, I object to the UC.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection to the modification is heard.

Is there objection to the original request?

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, reserving the right to object. I recognize that my friend from Oregon has been busy with affairs on the Finance Committee and so has not been involved in the now 2 years of debate over Nord Stream 2 on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. But, unfortunately, that has resulted in the Senator from Oregon being given talking points—perhaps from the administration, perhaps from colleagues—that are simply factually incorrect. I am sure that is inadvertent.

The Senator from Oregon just said that there is no way to stop this pipeline, and that the Trump administration failed to impose sanctions to stop

the pipeline. Both of those statements are factually wrong.

I was the author of two separate pieces of legislation that passed into law concerning Nord Stream 2. Both were bipartisan legislation. Both, I authored with Senator JEANNE SHAHEEN, a Democrat, in the Senate. Both passed with overwhelming bipartisan support from both Houses of Congress.

The first bill passed in December of 2019. Nord Stream 2 at the time was more than 90 percent complete, and the argument then that was being pushed by Russian disinformation and that, sadly, has been echoed by the Biden administration and was just echoed by the Senator from Oregon—the argument from Russian disinformation was, the pipeline can't be stopped; it is too late.

We know that was Russian disinformation because it was conclusively disproved. Putin stopped building the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline the very day that the Cruz-Shaheen bipartisan sanctions were signed into law—not the next day, not the next week. That day, we stopped the pipeline in its tracks.

But, Mr. President, it was not only stopped for 1 day; it was stopped for more than a year. For December of 2019, for January, February, March—every month in 2020, the pipeline lay dormant. It was a piece of metal at the bottom of the ocean. So the claim that we cannot stop this pipeline is flat-out false because we did.

By the way, when the Senator from Oregon said the Trump administration couldn't stop this pipeline, that, again, is just incorrect. When the President signed the legislation, the pipeline was stopped that day. It remained stopped for over a year.

When did Putin return to building this pipeline? The date is important. Putin returned to building the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline on January 24, 2021, 4 days after Joe Biden was sworn into office. And he did so because Joe Biden and his team had already conveyed weakness that they would not enforce U.S. sanctions law and that they would roll over and give Putin and Russia a generational geopolitical gift. The only reason Putin began building again is because the Biden White House defied U.S. law to surrender to Putin.

Now, Joe Biden is entitled to believe that is a good policy idea. What he is not entitled to do is ignore U.S. law. And the Senator from Oregon suggests this nominee has nothing to do with that. Well, it is the Department of the Treasury that is ignoring the CAATSA law, that is refusing to follow the policy.

Sadly, this moment marks a new threshold in that debate. Up until this point, it has only been the Biden White House that has been surrendering to Russia. Sadly, now we have a Democratic Member of the Senate objecting to legislation to stop the Biden White House from surrendering to Russia. That is a move in the wrong direction.

That being said, my offer of reasonable compromise remains if we can come together as we have repeatedly, Republicans and Democrats, to force the President to obey the law and to stop surrendering to Russia in a way that hurts America, hurts Europe.

By the way, the European Parliament—my friends on the Democratic side of the aisle like to consider themselves lovers of our friends in Europe. The European Parliament voted on Nord Stream 2. The vote was roughly 500 to 50 against Nord Stream 2 because it makes our European allies subject to energy blackmail by Putin and his successor dictators.

This is bad for America, bad for Europe, bad for peace, bad for the environment, but good for Vladimir Putin and for Russia. Joe Biden is mistaken to be committing this surrender, and my friend from Oregon errs in joining Joe Biden in that surrender to Russia.

I hope the Senator from Oregon reconsiders. I hope Congress comes together again. But as long as that does not happen, I object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The objection was heard.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I am going to be very brief and then make a unanimous consent request.

Again, we have a difference of opinion with respect to the facts. That is what the Senate is all about—real debate. In a moment, I am going to ask unanimous consent to put into the RECORD at this point an article from just a few days ago from the Wall Street Journal that makes the truth about Nord Stream 2 AG very clear.

In effect, in the Wall Street Journal article that we are going to put into the RECORD, the pipeline owner said last week that construction on the pipeline has been completed.

There is no reason to object to this very talented individual, John Davidson, to head this important post after he got a 28-to-0 vote in the Senate Finance Committee.

I think this article in the Wall Street Journal that I have just asked to be printed in the RECORD at this point in the debate, so we can make sure the facts are correct, supports our basic proposition on this side of the aisle.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Wall Street Journal, Sept. 13]

SENATE REPUBLICANS VOW TO BLOCK TREASURY NOMINATIONS UNTIL NORD STREAM II FIRM IS SANCTIONED

(By Ian Talley and Brett Forrest)

WASHINGTON.—Senior Senate Republicans on Monday threatened to indefinitely hold up the nominations of five top Treasury Department officials if the Biden administration doesn't blacklist the firm managing Russia's Nord Stream 2 pipeline project.

Sen. Pat Toomey (R., Pa.) and Ted Cruz (R., Texas) said they are prepared to approve the nominations, including two national security posts that oversee sanctions and counterterrorism finance, if the Treasury Department blacklists Russia-owned Nord Stream 2 AG.

The Biden administration has implemented sanctions against several firms that have provided support to the project but not against Nord Stream 2 AG, saying that it would irritate relations with critical ally Germany and do little to stop the project, given that it was near completion. Gazprom, Russia's state-controlled gas-export monopoly and the pipeline owner, said last week that construction on the pipeline had been completed. But there are still bureaucratic hurdles that have to be overcome to get it running.

Nord Stream 2 is designed to accommodate the transmission of 55 billion cubic meters of gas annually, the company said.

Republicans say they are concerned the pipeline project bolsters Europe's reliance on Russian energy and gives Moscow leverage over Washington's trans-Atlantic allies. By holding up the five top Treasury nominations, they hope to pressure the administration into sanctioning the managing firm and stymie the pipeline's startup.

"The administration's so-called 'deal' with Germany hands Vladimir Putin a geostrategic victory, entrenches corrupt Russian influence in Europe, and drastically weakens the security of Ukraine, Poland, and other states on the frontline of Kremlin aggression," Mr. Toomey, the ranking member of the Banking Committee, and Mr. Cruz said in a letter to the chairmen of the Senate Banking and Foreign Relations Committees.

A Treasury spokeswoman said that while the department has experienced career staff who are experts in their fields, "The Senate should move quickly to confirm these nominees who are integral to disrupting illicit finance, combating terrorism, and administering sanctions."

Nord Stream 2 AG officials didn't respond to a request for comment.

The Banking Committee is scheduled to vote Wednesday on the nominations of Brian Nelson as the Treasury's undersecretary for terrorism and financial intelligence and Elizabeth Rosenberg for the role of assistant secretary for terrorism financing.

Without Republican support in the committee, Democratic lawmakers face long odds getting the nominations approved.

That could leave empty the post responsible for overseeing U.S. sanctions policy, extending a vacancy that has already lasted nearly two years. The nominations of Jonathan Davidson as deputy undersecretary, Lily Lawrence Batchelder as assistant secretary for tax policy and Benjamin Harris as assistant secretary for economic policy all have been committee-approved, but full Senate ratification has been held up by Mr. Cruz.

The Texas Republican said he's prepared to lift his holds—as well as those he has on nearly two dozen State Department appointments—if the administration commits to sanctioning the Russian project management firm.

Sen. Robert Menendez (D., N.J.), the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, didn't immediately respond to a request for comment. The chairman of the Banking Committee, Sen. Sherrod Brown (D., Ohio), directed questions to the State Department and White House. "Decisions on sanctions regarding the NS II pipeline are made by the administration," a spokeswoman for Mr. Brown said.

The Republican senators say a federal law called the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, signed into law in 2017, mandates blacklisting companies or individuals involved in evasion of the act's sanctions. They say the provisions allow for the administration to delist the company, but that opens the door for Congress to vote on the issue.

Republican aides said the law mandating sanctions had bipartisan support, fueled by concern the Trump administration would treat Moscow too favorably. Given that some Democratic lawmakers opposed the Biden administration's Nord Stream 2 decision, those aides said Congress could vote to keep the firm on Treasury's blacklists.

The risk of sanctions, the aides said, could dissuade companies from providing certification.

In November, Norwegian certification company DNV suspended its work on Nord Stream 2 after assessing that its activities could expose the company to sanctions under Protecting Europe's Energy Security Act, a 2019 U.S. law specific to the pipeline, a company spokesman said.

Last week, Germany's energy regulator Bundesnetzagentur received Nord Stream 2 AG's application for an operating license. The company has four months to engage an independent certification company to complete an assessment of the pipeline's operational integrity.

Once a certification is complete, the German regulator would send its decision to the European Commission, but this isn't the final hurdle to gas flows. Initial deliveries could face additional, unrelated delays. Last month, a German court rejected Nord Stream 2 AG's bid to bypass a European Union pro-competition regulation mandating that a gas producer and the company that transports the gas be separate entities.

One of the congressional aides said the Biden administration, besides worrying about creating diplomatic friction with allies, may also be concerned about setting precedent regarding sanctions, because Treasury officials also could have to sanction other companies.

Mr. WYDEN. Mr. President, I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I don't have objection to the article being included in the RECORD, but I would note that, once again, the Senator from Oregon is limited by the fact that he has not participated in the debate on this in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee for the last 2 years, because what he stated in his first remarks was that there was no way to stop the pipeline initially and the Trump administration failed to do so. That was factually incorrect.

We stopped the pipeline the day President Trump signed the bipartisan Cruz-Shaheen sanctions into law. That was December of 2019, and the pipeline was stopped for over a year. As I mentioned, on January 24 of 2020, 4 days after Joe Biden was sworn into office, Putin began—returned to building the pipeline because Biden had already telegraphed his surrender to Russia.

Now, what my friend from Oregon just said is—he repeated news coverage that the pipeline is now, today, complete. That is, in fact, correct, that because Biden surrendered on this point, Putin went all in and finished the pipeline. But this is where being part of the Foreign Relations Committee discussion matters, because even though the pipeline is now physically complete, it does not mean it is operative. After the pipeline is physically complete, there are months of certifications required and multiple authorities.

The legislation that Congress passed as a bipartisan matter also imposes sanctions on any entity, any company that certifies the pipeline. Indeed, the position of the Biden State Department has been that even when the pipeline is complete, we can stop it from ever going online by stopping certification.

So the legislation that I just asked for consent would do exactly that—it would stop certification, and it would leave it as a hunk of metal rather than an operating pipeline enriching Putin at the expense of Europe and America. So we still have time to stop this.

One final observation. This morning, I spent a couple of hours in a classified briefing on this topic, on Nord Stream 2. A question that I posed to the Biden State Department—I said: What exactly did Joe Biden, did the administration get in exchange for surrendering to Russia in a way that will impact this country and Europe for decades to come?

The answer, I will say, was altogether unsatisfactory. The only thing the Biden White House got was good will from Angela Merkel, whose party was just defeated resoundingly this past weekend in the election. So Angela Merkel is on her way out. We got good will from someone who will very soon no longer be the leader of Germany.

Instead, the German people voted in—elevated the Greens, who were vocally opposed to the Nord Stream 2 Pipeline. So the new government in Germany is not going to appreciate Biden surrendering to Putin in a way that hurts the environment and hurts Germany. But we have alienated the Ukrainians; we have alienated the Poles; we have alienated Eastern Europe. The European Union voted 500 to 50, roughly, against Nord Stream 2. We got nothing, and we hurt U.S. jobs.

This is foolhardy, and I am hopeful that the Senate will exercise our historical role over foreign policy and prevent a President and an administration from making this mistake.

I would note, Secretary of State Blinken and the State Department argued vociferously in the interagency process to sanction Nord Stream 2 AG, and it was the political operatives at the Biden White House who overrode the State Department. They should not have done so, and today the Department of the Treasury should follow the law and impose sanctions under CAATSA or delist them and trigger a vote in this Congress.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Florida.

(The remarks of Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. JOHNSON, and Mr. LEE pertaining to the introduction of S. 2895 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 2895

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. Mr. President, as if in legislative session, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed

to the immediate consideration of S. 2895, introduced earlier today. I ask unanimous consent that the bill be considered read a third time and passed, and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Ms. CANTWELL. Reserving the right to object.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, Senator SCOTT's bill would prohibit the Department of Transportation, Amtrak, Transportation Security Administration, or other Agencies from requiring passengers in interstate transportation to show proof of COVID-19 in order to travel.

I appreciate my colleagues—all of whom I serve with on the Commerce Committee. I know that they know well—we have had a lot of discussions about the impacts of COVID-19 on our transportation sector. They know very well that we had to spend a lot of resources keeping our transportation sector moving.

Why?

Because we have to move goods and services and products. During COVID-19, we had to move essential workers, and we had to move product.

There is no doubt our transportation system needs to have keen oversight as it relates to moving in even a pandemic. That is what we did. I am proud of the work that we did. But it is not lost on anybody that COVID-19, the deadliest pandemic in U.S. history—as of September 28, there have already been 700,000 COVID-19-related deaths in the United States and over 43 million infections. In my State, 7,586 deaths and 652,000 cases.

So the point is here, we have been fighting this pandemic with all of these tools and no one has ever suggested the one—that Senator SCOTT nor my colleagues from the Commerce Committee are saying what the President might do. That is not what he has suggested.

In fact, I was very involved in an area of transportation where we wanted to get cruise ships back in service to Alaska at a critical moment—both for Alaska and a critical moment during the pandemic. Not everybody was ready to have that happen; not everybody was ready to move. And yet it meant so much to Alaska that we all worked together. And in some instances, those cruise ships said: We are going to require the vaccine.

So the point is here, we are not trying to mandate this. Now, if the President and the industry feel that it is important to have a workforce so that that workforce continues to serve us and conserve the growing response to the pandemic—which I mean responding to the aftermath of the pandemic—that is why we spent money. That is why we are trying to take off. That is why we are trying to return a workforce. That is why we are returning

kids to school. That is why we are trying to get our hospitals staffed. That is why we are doing things.

That is the only thing the President said, is that those people should get a vaccine. He has not said, if you want to get on an airplane, you have to get vaccinated—maybe if you are flying overseas and have to work with another country.

My colleague from Florida knows all too well because he and I are working together to try to get temperature checks in a very broad way established at airports through the U.S. We have agreed that is a smart thing to do. It has been done on an international basis for a long time and it prevents people from getting on a plane who are sick. The President has not said this.

To now put a bill through that might have prohibited the cruise ship industry reestablishing service up to Alaska because now, all of a sudden, you are going to have all of these things is not the way I want to go.

I like what we have been able to achieve. It has taken hard work and working together. It does not take us passing this bill by Senator SCOTT.

I object, and I hope my colleagues understand that we are willing to work on anything related to the transportation sector so it can keep our U.S. economy moving.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Objection is heard.

The Senator from Florida.

Mr. SCOTT of Florida. First off, I am disappointed my colleague objected. I think No. 1 is this is unconstitutional. First off, President Biden promised he wouldn't be doing this. This is unconstitutional.

Here is what it is going to do. If you talk to businesses around this country, they are already struggling to get people back to work because of excess funding that has been provided. And now we are going to tell a bunch of people that you can't come back to work because you haven't been vaccinated. We are going to tell people, you can't get on an airplane because you haven't been vaccinated.

This is wrong. This is not what the Federal Government ought to be doing. They ought to do what I did when I was Governor. You give people the information and feel comfortable that the American public will make a good decision.

I think this is a mistake. I hope my colleague will change her mind. And I hope this President will not continue down the path of requiring Americans to get vaccinations, because I don't think it is fair to Americans and I think it is unconstitutional.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Nevada.

TRIBUTE TO SUSAN MEUSCHKE

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO. Mr. President, today, I want to recognize a friend of mine, Susan Meuschke, who is the Executive Director of the Nevada Coalition to End Domestic and Sexual Vio-

lence. She is retiring after three decades working on behalf of women and children in my home State of Nevada.

Sue has been a champion for victims of domestic violence and their families since she worked as a volunteer for the Committee to Aid Abused Women in Reno, NV. It was there—listening to the stories of women dealing with family violence—that she began to understand both their struggles and their courage.

Sue went on to work with the coalition for 32 years, helping develop it into a powerful organization statewide for those affected by domestic and sexual violence.

I have had the pleasure of working with Sue since I was Nevada's attorney general, and together we passed legislation to create dedicated funding for domestic violence programs. She has continued to be a resource for me during my time in the U.S. Senate, as I have worked to prevent sex trafficking, to stem the tide of violence against Native women, and push for the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act.

During the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, I pushed to make sure that our next COVID package included more support for survivors of domestic violence. Sue worked to distribute those Federal funds fairly and effectively to Nevadans, and she worked especially hard to promote a microloan program that families could use to regain financial independence.

As Sue enters her retirement, I want to make sure everyone in Nevada appreciates her decades of advocacy. She has made a profound difference for families in the Silver State. I have no doubt that whoever succeeds Sue at the coalition will continue to work tirelessly to end domestic and sexual violence, because, honestly, we still have so much work to do.

That is why I am here on the Senate floor today. The reality is that women's rights are under attack around the country, and that includes reproductive rights. Anti-abortion extremists are going to great lengths to stop women from seeking reproductive care. As of June, they had proposed 500 new laws restricting reproductive rights and passed 70 of these laws.

Let's start with Texas, where a new law prohibits abortions before many people even know they are pregnant. The law lets anyone sue those who aid and abet abortions and get a \$10,000 reward. It has the potential to create a whole industry of vigilantes prying into their neighbors' lives, all to stop women from being able to access reproductive healthcare.

The American people—70 percent of us—oppose deputizing private citizens to collect these kinds of bounties.

But even though the Texas law is extreme, the Supreme Court has refused to stop it from going into effect. That means that, right now, 7 million women of reproductive age in Texas have been deprived of a key constitu-

tional right, a right that they have had for 50 years.

Clinics in Oklahoma City, OK, and Little Rock, AR, have seen the number of Texas women seeking abortions jump tenfold in a matter of days.

But it is not just Texas where the right to medical care is threatened. Dangerous abortion bans have been signed into law in Mississippi, Arizona, and Georgia, among others. And all of this is happening because anti-abortion extremists have been working for decades to limit women's choices.

Let's be very clear: they are on the brink of success. On December 1, the Supreme Court is set to hear oral arguments in a case called *Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health*, which deals with an abortion ban in Mississippi. This case was specifically chosen by anti-choice activists to help strike down *Roe v. Wade*.

Sadly, the Court has given every signal it is willing to do the activists' bidding by overturning *Roe v. Wade* and allowing these bans to take effect. That is why I and 47 of my Senate colleagues filed a friend of the court brief last week, calling on the Supreme Court to stick to the settled precedent of *Roe* and strike down the Mississippi law.

But if the Supreme Court doesn't abide by 50 years of its own rulings, well, there are 19 States where abortion would be illegal the day after a Supreme Court ruling overturning *Roe v. Wade*, and others where abortion bans would likely follow.

All in all, nearly half of women nationwide will see the nearest clinic close. The average distance to the nearest clinic for those seeking reproductive care will jump from 25 to 279 miles. Anyone who has ever worked a minimum-wage job knows that they don't have the luxury of traveling hundreds of miles for healthcare.

Women's healthcare isn't optional. Nevadans know this. That is why we worked so hard in Nevada to protect the right to choose.

In the nineties, we passed a ballot initiative to enshrine choice into law, and we have actually done away with the kind of restrictions on abortion that are popping up in State after State.

But what we are seeing in Texas and other States across the country threatens the future of *Roe v. Wade* everywhere. Let me be clear: It threatens the future of *Roe v. Wade* everywhere. And without *Roe*, there will be no Federal protections in place, paving the way for anti-choice lawmakers to pass legislation to restrict reproductive rights anywhere in the country.

And that is why it is so important for the Senate to pass the Women's Health Protection Act. This bill would outlaw bans in other medically unnecessary restrictions on abortion across the country. It would mean that States could not impose medically unnecessary ultrasounds, excessive waiting periods, and extreme burdens on